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April 27, 2015

Mr. Murry Wilson, Environmental Resource Specialist
SLO County Planning and Building
976 Osos Street, Room 200
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408

Dear Mr. Wilson,

I'm writing to urge San Luis Obispo County planners to reject the Phillips 66 plan for a new rail terminal near its Santa Maria refinery to accommodate crude oil shipments. The proposed project would incur major environmental costs at local and global levels.

Locally, communities in California through which these crude oil shipments would pass would be put at risk. Shipments of crude-by-rail have greatly increased in recent years, and the frequency of accidents has increased apace. The tank cars proposed for these shipments are not strong enough to withstand derailments, and some recent oil-train accidents have been horrific, as I'm sure you are aware. It is simply unconscionable to put major California cities at risk of disaster. Moreover, the tank cars leak toxic fumes, and neighborhoods through which these trains would pass would be exposed to these fumes, threatening the health of tens of thousands of persons.

More globally, it is clear that California and the nation as a whole should be bending greater effort toward diminishing our use of fossil fuels. It is mainly through governmental action at all levels that this kind of transition must be pursued: corporate interests lead only to 'business as usual' decisions, with no diminution of fossil fuel dependency, and the consequent increase of atmospheric carbon dioxide and ocean acidification that we know is occurring. The state of California has taken leadership positions in the struggle to diminish fossil fuel use; and a correct decision by San Luis Obispo County in this case would be a milestone in this effort.

It's time to 'do the right thing': a few years ago, those who perceived impending financial calamity mainly kept quiet and let it happen; but the cost of 'business as usual' in this environmental struggle will simply be too high.

Sincerely yours,

Allen M. Carroll

